

**International Mobile Satellite Organization**

**ASSEMBLY**

Eighteenth Session

25 – 29 September 2006

**Agenda item 6**

ASSEMBLY/18/6/REV/1\*

Origin: Director

Date: 1 August 2006

**LONG RANGE IDENTIFICATION AND TRACKING OF SHIPS (LRIT)**

***Executive Summary:***

this document provides information relating to the question posed by the IMO Maritime Safety Committee regarding IMSO's willingness and ability to undertake oversight of Long Range Identification and Tracking of Ships (LRIT)

***Action to be taken:***

1. to decide that IMSO is willing and able to undertake the performance review and audit of certain aspects of the LRIT system on behalf of IMO;
2. to note that an appropriate amendment will be necessary to the IMSO Convention; and
3. to request the Director to inform IMO accordingly

***Related documents:***

ASSEMBLY/18/INF/4, Annex IX, Reports of the Ninth to Fifteenth Sessions of the Advisory Committee

**1 BACKGROUND**

1.1 At its Seventeenth Session, the IMSO Assembly "*noted a statement by the Director that IMO is currently discussing the issue of Long Range Identification and Tracking of Ships (LRIT), and has charged the IMO Sub-Committee on Search and Rescue (COMSAR) with making recommendations. One possibility at that time was that IMO would decide to ask IMSO whether it would be willing in future to carry out oversight and some other roles in relation to LRIT. The Assembly endorsed the Director's intention to keep in close touch with developments in this area and inform the Assembly accordingly*" (ASSEMBLY/17/Report, paragraph 10.3.9 refers).

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\* Document ASSEMBLY/18/6 which was originally issued on 10 October 2005 has been revised to reflect subsequent events

1.2 The Director subsequently submitted a document to the Eightieth Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), held in May 2005, entitled "Measures to Enhance Maritime Security: A Practical System for Implementing Long Range Identification and Tracking of Ships (LRIT)", as an IMSO Secretariat paper (MSC 80/5/5). This document was sent to all IMSO Member States on 12 December 1005

1.3 In introducing this document at MSC 80, the Secretariat stated that the Organization "... *did not see itself owning or operating the LRIT Data Centre as this would create conflicts of interest between the oversight functions and the operational roles*" (MSC 80/WP.7/Add.1 paragraph 13).

1.4 At its Eightieth Session, the IMO MSC:

- “.1 agreed that the LRIT Co-ordinator should carry out the oversight of the LRIT Data Centre, the LRIT Tracking Services and relevant elements of the communications systems used, and, as appropriate, of the contracts between participants in the system;*
- .2 agreed that oversight by the LRIT Co-ordinator should include verification that the security requirements established by IMO for the entire LRIT system are adhered to, and that the LRIT Co-ordinator should report to IMO on its findings;*
- .3 requested IMSO to advise the IMO MSC whether IMSO would be willing and able to undertake the oversight of the LRIT system on behalf of IMO; and*
- .4 invited IMSO, if it was not already doing so, to contribute to the work of the COMSAR Correspondence Group on LRIT.” (MSC 80/24 paragraph 5.98)*

1.5 At its Eleventh Session, the IMSO Advisory Committee considered the request from the IMO MSC in paragraph 1.4.3 above, and noted that a number of issues should be further considered regarding the oversight of IMSO in the developing LRIT, including:

- (a) the implementation timetable within IMO and IMSO, including the correspondence groups and the intersessional working groups which have been established by IMO to work on the principles;
- (a) the architecture of the system, including the technical and practical details;
- (b) the scope of IMSO's role, as appropriate, and the budgetary and staffing implications; and
- (c) the possible reintroduction of one of the amendments to the IMSO Convention proposed by the IWG but which were not pursued by the Assembly at its Seventeenth Session; or an alternative means of incorporating LRIT oversight within the Convention.

1.6 Subsequently, MSC 81 (10-19 May 2006) "... noting that the previously used term 'oversight of the LRIT system' had now been replaced by the term 'performance review and audit of certain aspects of the LRIT system', and mindful of the importance of having in place from the outset the necessary arrangements for the review of the performance and the auditing of the LRIT system, invited IMSO, as a possible candidate, to advise not later than at MSC 82 whether IMSO would be willing and able, bearing in mind the envisaged entry into force of the SOLAS regulation, to undertake the performance review and audit of certain aspects of the LRIT system on behalf of the Organization." (MSC 81/25 paragraph 5.121).

1.7 The Advisory Committee discussed this issue at its Twelfth Session, and "recommended that the Assembly decide to respond to IMO that IMSO would be willing to undertake the oversight of the LRIT system within the legal framework established by IMO, but that IMSO was not in a position to state that it was able to undertake oversight of the LRIT system until the operational requirements had been sufficiently developed by IMO". The report of the Twelfth Session of the Committee was sent to all IMSO Member States on 1 November 2005.

## 2 CURRENT STATUS

2.1 IMO has now completed the fundamental work relating to the implementation of LRIT. Specifically, MSC 81 adopted:

- (a) new SOLAS regulation V 19-1 on LRIT (resolution MSC.202(81) – attached at Annex I to this document);
- (b) Performance Standards and Functional Requirements for LRIT (resolution MSC.210(81) – attached at Annex II to this document); and
- (c) Arrangements for the Timely Establishment of the LRIT System (resolution MSC.211(81) – attached at Annex III to this document).

2.2 MSC 81 decided that the LRIT system should be operational by 31 December 2008 and the SOLAS regulation includes relevant implementation dates for all ships. The Performance Standard deals with the architecture of the system, including relevant technical and practical details and the functions of the LRIT Co-ordinator, which is the role that IMSO has been asked to undertake.

2.3 The budgetary and staffing implications for IMSO of taking on the role of LRIT Co-ordinator will be described in an Addendum to this document, which will be distributed in September 2006 after review by the Sixteenth Session of the Advisory Committee to be held immediately preceding the Assembly Session.

2.4 The current amendments to the IMSO Convention, which were approved in principle at the Seventeenth Session of the IMSO Assembly, do not specifically provide for the possibility of IMSO assuming other oversight functions such as envisaged in relation to LRIT. However, the IWG, in its proposals to the Assembly, had proposed alternative texts to cover such an eventuality as follows:

Either:

new paragraph (1) (bis) to Article 3 "Purpose":

*"Subject to the decision of the Assembly, the Organization may assume any other [oversight] functions or duties [at the request of xxx]."*

Or:

new paragraph in Article 9 "Functions of the Assembly:

*"At the request of a Member State or at the initiative of the Director, the Assembly can consider a proposal to entrust new functions to the*

*Organization, and the Assembly will take a decision on the proposal in accordance with Article 8."*

2.5 This proposal was not taken up by the Assembly at its Seventeenth Session. However, an amendment has been proposed by some IMSO Parties (ASSEMBLY/18/4.1 refers) for consideration and possible adoption by the Assembly at this session.

### 3 **RECOMMENDATION**

3.1 Taking into account the recommendation of the Advisory Committee in paragraph 1.7 of this document, and in the light of the developments within IMO, particularly the new SOLAS regulation, the supporting MSC resolutions and the renewed request from the IMO MSC 81 "*whether IMSO would be willing and able to undertake the performance review and audit of certain aspects of the LRIT system on behalf of the Organization*", the Director recommends that the Assembly decides that IMSO is both willing and able to undertake such performance review and audit.

### 4 **ACTION REQUIRED**

The Assembly decides that IMSO is willing and able to undertake the performance review and audit of certain aspects of the LRIT system on behalf of IMO.

The Assembly notes that an appropriate amendment will be necessary to the IMSO Convention.

The Assembly decides to request the Director to inform IMO accordingly.

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